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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/670,478	09/26/2003	Bertrand Lion	05725.1242-00	7403
22852	7590	03/26/2008		
FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER LLP 901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413				
EXAMINER				
PEZZUTO, HELEN LEE				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1796				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
03/26/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/670,478

Applicant(s)

LION ET AL.

Examiner

Helen L. Pezzuto

Art Unit

1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-8, 18, 26-32, 35, 72, 73 and 75-89 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-8, 18, 26-32, 35, 72, 73 and 75-89 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Currently, claims 1, 3-8, 18, 26-32, 35, 72-73, and 75-89 are pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 3-8, 18, 26-32, 35, 72-73, and 75-89 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Galleguillos et al. (US-005) or Frechet et al. (US-855 or US-925) or Schimmel et al. (US-883) or Anton et al. (US-206) in view of Graulus et al. (US-446) or Charmot et al. (US-364) or Grubbs et al. (US-666) for the reasons of record.

US 6,410,005 B1 to Galleguillos et al. discloses AB block copolymer comprising a soft hydrophobic and a hard, hydrophilic blocks with two or more distinct glass transition temperatures, represented by Structures 1 and 2

Art Unit: 1796

(col. 4, lines 44-65). Specifically, prior art discloses a process of polymerizing a polyfunctional monomer X within the scope of the instant intermediate block constituent (see col. 4, structures 1 and 2) with a first ethylenically unsaturated monomer(s) to form an A block, and subsequently polymerizing a second ethylenically unsaturated monomer(s) containing at least one carboxylic acid group with the A block to form a B block, and the resultant block copolymer (col. 3, lines 53-60; col. 4, lines 18-43; col. 5, lines 2-4; col. 6, line 27 to col. 7, line 57). Thus, a copolymer containing blocks of $-(B)_p-X-(B)_q-$, and $-(A)_n-A-X-A-(A)_n-$ is formed, wherein X is a multifunctional monomer that links A and B block. The linkage of X-X reads on the instant intermediate block, wherein X is also a constituent monomer of the A and B blocks in $-(B)_p-X-(B)_q-$, and $-(A)_n-A-X-A-(A)_n-$. Absent of specific compositional and architectural details defined for the instant intermediate block, prior art $-B-X-X-A-$ linkages in structures 1 and 2 fall within the scope of the instant intermediate block as both block A and B contains at least one constituent X, as defined in the present claims. US-005 teaches an average molecular weight of the resultant block copolymer of up to 1,000,000, within the scope of the instant claims 82-86, having film

Art Unit: 1796

forming property and water dispersibility (col. 6, lines 3-5). Furthermore, patentees disclose a preferred molecular weight of the A block in the range of 10,000 to 150,000, and that of the B block ranges from 1,000 to 50,000 (col. 5, lines 23-29; col. 22, Table 2; col. 36, lines 46-55). Prior art further teaches the weight percent of each of the monomers in the mixture can vary, depending on the desired properties if the final copolymer product. In one embodiment, patentees disclose 28 wt% to about 60 wt% of monomer A for A block and about 38 wt% to about 60 wt% of monomer B for B block (col. 13, lines 1-8). This clearly encompasses applicant's 50 wt% first block and 45 wt% of second block as expressed in the present claims. Suitable hydrophobic monomer A includes the various (meth)acrylates, (meth)acrylamides expressed in the present claims, with preferred species such as n-butyl acrylate, ethyl acrylate and 2-ethylhexyl acrylate which read on the instant low Tg monomeric species (col. 7, line 65 to col. 9, line 2). Patentees' preferred hydrophilic monomer B include ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid such as (meth)acrylic acid, which along with the disclosed alkyl methacrylates, clearly fall within the scope of the instant block having Tg greater than or equal to 40°C (col. 10, line

57 to col. 11, line 30). Prior art specifically disclose using varying proportion of mixtures of A and B monomers so as to achieve the desired balance of the resultant block polymer properties (col. 12, lines 12-15; col. 13, lines 1-8).

US 6,663,855 B2 and US 6,685,925 B2, both to Frechet et al. (reference will be made primarily with respect to the disclosure of US-855) discloses a block copolymer comprising a core polymer and two or more flanking polymers, wherein at least one of the flanking polymers is a copolymer derived from two or more monomers (abstract). Specifically, prior art block copolymer may have the linear structure of $(AB)_n$ -Core, wherein at least one of blocks A and B comprises two or more monomers is hydrophobic and hydrophilic. Typically, component A is a hard block having a high Tg (i.e. preferably from 30 to 150°C), and component B is a soft block having a low Tg (i.e. preferably from 175 to less than 30°C) (col. 3, line 66 to col. 4, line 36). The respective monomer components made up the core and flanking polymers are selected to produce a block polymer with balanced hydrophilic/hydrophobic characteristic (col. 4, lines 55-57). Prior art discloses M_n and M_w of the

Art Unit: 1796

respective core and flanking polymers and the resultant copolymer within the claimed range (see tables at cols. 23-26). A molar ratio of the core polymer to the flanking polymer from 1:10 to 10:1 is further suggested (col. 5, lines 1-15), clearly encompassing the instant weight percent of first and second blocks. US-925 further teaches preferred embodiments of block copolymers containing up to 85 wt% of the flanking polymers (i.e. within the scope of the first block) and core polymers (i.e. within the scope of the second block) (col. 8, line 66 to col. 9, line 3). Suitable monomers for the core and flanking polymers are taught within the scope of the present claims (col. 7, line 6 to col. 9, line 49). In the embodiment of A-B-A block copolymer, prior art teaches the transition from each A block to B block maybe tapered such that there may be a gradual compositional change from A block to B block. Furthermore, there may be several monomers in a single block or there may be one or more blocks of random copolymer, referred as to the R block. Prior art discloses polymer architecture of A-R-B-A, A-R-B-R-A, wherein R is random blocks of monomers A and B. Furthermore, patentees suggest the random block may have a compositional gradient of one monomer to the other (i.e. A:B) that varies across

Art Unit: 1796

the random block. Thus, prior art disclosure clearly suggest R contains a constituent monomer of the A and B block as presently claimed, and hence, embracing the instant intermediate block (US-855, col. 10, lines 13-50). Accordingly, the instant block copolymer comprising at least one first block, second block, linked together via an intermediate block comprising at least one constituent monomer of the at least first block and at least one constituent monomer of the at least one second block are taught within the scope of prior art block copolymer.

US 6,197,883 to Schimmel et al. discloses a coating composition comprising a block copolymer flow control agent. Prior art block copolymer contains at least a first and a second block, wherein the Tg of second block is at least 20°C greater than that of the first block. The resultant block copolymer contains at least 5 wt% to less than 95 wt% of the first and second blocks (col. 3, line 66 to col. 4, line 21). A weight ratio of the first block to the second block of the copolymer is taught to range from 0.05:1 to 19:1, embraces the recited weight percent of the instant first and second block (col. 4, lines 22-24). The resultant block copolymer has a number average molecular weight of from 500 to 100,000, within those expressed in

Art Unit: 1796

claims 82-86. Suitable first and second block monomers are derived from C₁-C₂₀ alkyl (meth)acrylates (col. 4, lines 22 to col. 6, line 10). Prior art discloses the inclusion of a minor amount of at least one hydroxyl functional ethylenically unsaturated monomer (i.e. hydroxyalkyl (meth)acrylate) in each of the first and second blocks, in a random or gradient fashion (col. 6, lines 11-41). This hydroxyl functional monomer may independently occupy at one or more blocks at any position within either or both of the first and second block in a random fashion or a gradient fashion. This would allow the permutation of the recited block copolymer containing an intermediate block, wherein the hydroxyl functional monomer randomly occupy the first and second block, as well as in the middle of the block. Prior art block copolymer is preferably produced by ATRP method wherein the instant polydispersity index of greater than 2 is clearly obtainable (col. 8, line 56 to col. 9, line 3). A triblock copolymer (IBMA/HPMA)-(2-EHMA/HPMA)-(DMAEMA/HPMA) is exemplified in Example A (col. 23), wherein HPMA falls within the scope of the instant intermediate block constituent. Thus, meeting the requirement of the present block copolymer as defined in the present claims.

US 6,153,206 to Anton et al. discloses a cosmetic composition comprising a synthetic polymer having a first repeating unit derived from methacrylic ester monomer having Tg of -10 to 75°C, and a second repeat unit derived from methacrylic ester monomer having Tg of 76 to 120°C. The resulting polymer can be a block copolymer having a Tg in the range of about 20 to 105°C, and a molecular weight of 5,000 to 300,000 (col. 2, lines 8-23; col. 5, lines 26-28). Patentees disclose a molecular weight of about 20,000 for the first and second repeating units (col. 3, lines 36-44; col. 4, lines 62-67), and a weight portions of the first repeating unit from 2-99 wt% and that of the second repeating unit from 1-98 wt%, and vice versa, in the copolymer (col. 5, lines 1-32). Suitable methacrylic ester monomers used as first and second repeating units fall within the scope of the first and second block monomer species expressed in the present claims (col. 3, line 56 to col. 4, line to col. 5, line 54). Prior art teaches representative architectures of block and random block polymer containing blocks of first and second repeating units with random blocks containing first and second repeating units dispersed between the respective blocks

(col. 4, lines 28-60). Thus, encompassing the presently claimed block copolymer containing a first, second and an intermediate blocks as defined in the present claims.

Prior art discussed above provide clear disclosures regarding the method and the selection of various monomers species and their relative proportions in producing block copolymer systems having balance of hydrophilic/hydrophobic properties. The selection of varying amounts of hard and soft block components with differences in glass transition temperature is suggested within the scope of the present claims. Accordingly, one skilled in the art would have readily envisaged the selection of the suitable monomers having Tg differences as taught, motivated by the reasonable expectation of success in forming block copolymers with balanced hydrophilic/hydrophobic characteristics. Once the respective monomer block components are suggested with Tg consideration, the determination of their optimum proportions or workable ranges taught within the general disclosures of prior art, would involve only routine skill in the art. Some of the references discussed are silent regarding the polydispersity index expressed in the present claims, the examiner is of the position that it would have been obvious

and fully within the purview of one having ordinary skill in the art to control the optimum molecular weight, polydispersity, polymer composition and architectures of the resultant block copolymer product by varying experimental parameters such as source, amount, and solvation of catalyst/initiators/control agents, polymerization temperature and time, etc., as shown in ancillary references, US 5,994,446, US 6,518,364 and US 6,410,666, which describes various processes in the production of block copolymer systems. Accordingly, the instant invention as defined in the present claims, is rendered prima facie obvious in view of prior art teachings.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments and 132 Declaration filed 1/7/08 have been fully considered but they are not found to be persuasive. Firstly, applicant urges that Frechet et al. prefer a polymer contains more of the low Tg component B than the high Tg component A. The examiner is of the position that the instant 50-90 wt% high Tg first block and 5-45 wt% low Tg second block are still well within prior art 1:10 to 10:1 range of molar ratios for core and flanking polymers (see US-855, col. 5, lines 12-13; US-925,

col. 4, lines 66-67), and preferably up to 85 wt% of the flanking polymer (i.e. the hard, high Tg block) (US-925, col. 8, line 66-67). And as such any molar ratio used with the range disclosed in prior art is expected to be successful in the production of the block copolymer. Similarly, applicant urges that Anton et al. (US-206) prefers an almost equal amount of the first and second repeating units. Counsel is cordially directed to col. 5, lines 3-19, wherein patentees teach the weight portions of the first and second repeating units in the copolymer can vary from 2-99 wt% of the first repeat unit to 1-98 wt% of the second repeat unit, and vice versa. Thus, any relative proportions of the first and second repeating units employed within the range disclosed is expected to be suitable and operational. Secondly, applicant urges that prior art do not suggest a third/intermediate block or a polydispersity index of greater than 2. This is not found to be compelling as the issues were addressed repeatedly in prior correspondences of record. In Galleguillos et al. (US-005), Counsel is cordially directed to col. 4, structure 1, representing a copolymer containing blocks of $-(B)_p-X-(B)_q-$, and $-(A)_n-A-X-A-(A)_n-$, wherein X is a multifunctional monomer that links A and B block. The

Art Unit: 1796

linkage of X-X reads on the instant intermediate block as recited, wherein X is also a constituent monomer of the A and B blocks in $-(B)_p-X-(B)_q-$, and $-(A)_n-A-X-A-(A)_n-$. In Frechet et al. patentees disclose an embodiment of A-B-A block copolymer, prior art teaches the transition from each A block to B block maybe tapered such that there may be a gradual compositional change from A block to B block. Furthermore, there may be several monomers in a single block or there may be one or more blocks of random copolymer, referred as to the R block. Prior art discloses polymer architecture of A-R-B-A, A-R-B-R-A, wherein R is random blocks of monomers A and B. Still further, patentees suggest the random block may have a compositional gradient of one monomer to the other (i.e. A:B) that varies across the random block. Thus, prior art disclosure clearly suggest R contains a constituent monomer of the A and B block as presently claimed, and hence, embracing the instant intermediate block as defined in the present claims (US-855, col. 10, lines 13-50). Some references are silent regarding the recited polydispersity index, and hence are generic to any polydispersity index, inclusive of applicant's, absent showing of unexpected results. In any event, the examiner is of the position that it would have

been obvious and fully within the purview of one having ordinary skill in the art to control the optimum polydispersity of the resultant block copolymer product by varying experimental parameters such as source, amount, and solvation of catalyst/initiators/control agents, polymerization temperature and time, etc., as shown in ancillary references, US 5,994,446, US 6,518,364 and US 6,410,666, which describes various processes in the production of block copolymer systems having varying polydispersity index. Finally, regarding the 132 Declaration filed on 1/7/08, the examiner is of the position that applicant has not convincingly shown that the alleged unexpected result of enhanced oil resistance is not merely secondary in nature. Firstly, the comparative results are not commensurate in scope with the instant claims because only a single weight percent and compositional data point of 70% of the first block polymer of 50% isobornyl acrylate and 50% isobornyl methacrylate with a Tg of 102°C and 30% of a second block polymer of isobutyl acrylate with a Tg of -24°C has been compared as the instant block copolymer, whereas the claims are much broader with respect to what the block copolymer can be. it has been held that to overcome a reasonable case of prima

facie obviousness a given claim must be commensurate in scope with any showing of unexpected results. A limited showing of criticality is insufficient to support a broadly claimed subject matter. Secondary, the property of enhanced oil resistance associated with a large amount of high Tg block is not unexpected by nature of its higher Tg and greater hydrophilicity, and thus, is expected to exhibit higher oil/heat resistance and weatherability. Accordingly, the examiner's position is maintained.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Helen L. Pezzuto whose telephone number is (571) 272-1108. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 AM to 4 PM, Monday thru Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Helen L. Pezzuto/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1796

hlp

Application Number**Application/Control No.**

10/670,478

Examiner

Helen L. Pezzuto

**Applicant(s)/Patent under
Reexamination**

LION ET AL.

Art Unit

1796